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10 ORIENTATION--information especially likely to be needed by users of a file as a frame of reference for understanding the materials classified elsewhere; organization of the file, special coding decisions, and evaluation of the file.

GUIDE TO THE EZ6 MALTA FILE

/Malta, or more correctly the Maltese Islands, lies approximately half-way between Gibraltar and Suez, roughly sixty miles south of Sicily and one hundred-eighty miles east of Tunisia in North Africa. The Maltese Islands consist of Malta proper (to which much of the information in the file pertains), Gozo, Comino and several minor islets. This area is one of the most densely populated geographical units in the world with close to 2700 people per square mile. In addition to Italian and English, the Maltese speak their own distinct language which is morphologically related to North African Arabic but with much of its vocabulary, syntax and idiom derived from Sicilian. Most of the data in the file pertain to 20th century Malta and its Mediterranean peasant population, with information prior to 1900 being considered as historical and marked accordingly. The one exception to this is 7: Busuttil "Holiday Customs in Malta and Sports, Usages, Ceremonies, Omens and Superstitions of the Maltese People" in which the data presented apparently still apply.

The historical roots of 20th century Malta extend far back into the past for in addition to archaeological evidence showing extensive Neolithic occupation of Malta (see 3: Buxton and 9: Luke), these islands also were a Phoenician and Carthaginian colony. They were later captured by the Romans in 218 B.C. When the Roman Empire was divided in 395 A.D., they fell to the Byzantine Emperor. The islands were later conquered by the Arabs in 870 A.D. and wrested from them in turn by the Norman Sicilians in 1090 A.D. In 1530 A.D. Emperor Charles V presented the islands to the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem (later to be known as the Knights of Malta),

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who turned them into a stronghold, which, because of its strength, was able to resist successfully the Turkish siege in 1565. In later years the islands were held by Napoleon from 1798-1800, then captured by the British in 1800 and retained by them. Malta received dominion status in 1921, but this status reverted to Crown Colony in 1933 after the church-state controversy of 1930-32. In 1964 Malta achieved independence.

There are nine English language sources in this file whose authors display a wide range of professional interests (two sources were written by geographers, one by a traveler, one by an ethnologist, one by a physician/physical anthropologist, one by a psychologist, one by a folklorist, one by an indigene/educator and one by a govemment official). Sources 1: Bowen-Jones, 3: Buxton, 7: Busuttil and 9: Luke used in conjunction with one another would give a fairly complete general picture of Maltese ethnography. 1: Bowen-Jones is especially to be noted for its very detailed study of human geography (cultural adaptation to physical environment). This source also summarizes in context a number of the publications of the Durham Department of Geography. 2: Boissevain presents an interesting study of the dynamics of social interaction between the State, the church and the political parties, in relationship to the villages. 3: Buxton as noted above provides some summary material on geography, culture history, archaeology and demography, but is especially to be noted for its data on physical anthropology. 4: Cassar provides some information on votive or propitiation offerings made to a church or shrine as the fulfillment of a vow by a patient who has supposedly been cured in a

miraculous manner of some disease or infirmity. The author discusses the history of these offerings and their function as a form of anxiety reducing mechanism in the society. 5: Cremona is a discussion of Maltese funeary customs, their change with time, class differences in observance, and distribution of these customs in the Mediterranean area. 6: Beeley is a study of the present-day socio-economic situation of the Maltese farmer, which along with 1: Bowen-Jones, provides a well-rounded coverage of agriculture and the status of the farmer in Malta. In addition to its general ethnographic data, 7: Busuttil also contains specific information on religious and secular holidays and omens and superstitions. Most of these data are repeated in 8: Brockman, which adds little to the file except possibly some limited information on cultural change as evidenced through modifications in ancient Maltese customs to fit modern socio-cultural patterns. As noted before 9: Luke provides general ethnographic coverage on Malta as a whole, but in addition presents an excellent account of the post-World War II development in Maltese politics including relationships with Great Britain at this time, and the various intricacies of political behavior leading eventually to the establishment of a formal constitution (April 15, 1959).

Several special marking decisions have been made in compiling this file, notably: relations of church and state--659; government pawnbroking--655; gaugau--774; casals (townships)--632; cofraternities (fratelli)--794; festa partiti (local subdivisions of the community)--621; band clubs--575/621 (for composition); sport clubs--575/526; a political party committee or club--665.

This file may be considered to be adequate for most cross-cultural research, although as seen from above

it is skewed towards religion, politics, agriculture and social interaction. The file is lacking in data on material culture, and is weak on social structure and especially so on kinship with 2: Boissevain providing most if not all of this limited information./

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